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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 30 | Min 16 | Humidity 20% Partly sunny Sensex 82,626 | Nifty 25,471 | Gold 1,54,515 | Silver 2,46,003 | Dollar 90.63 | Euro 107.52 | GBP 123.40

UNFIT CERTIFICATE

Private Bus Owners Association alleges irregularities in issuance of Fitness Certificates to nearly 10,000 out-of-State vehicles over 6 months

PAGE 2

VICTORY MARCH

India dominate in clash with Pakistan; West Indies thrash Nepal by 9 wickets; Super 8 hopes alive for US after win against Namibia

PAGE 9

It starts with a prompt and a viral trend and before you know it, you end up feeding all personal information to AI systems — experts warn uploaded images and biometrics become part of vast data pools that are stored, shared and sometimes misused

MAY AI ASK YOU A PERSONAL QUESTION?

As of now, there is no transparency about how securely is personal data stored

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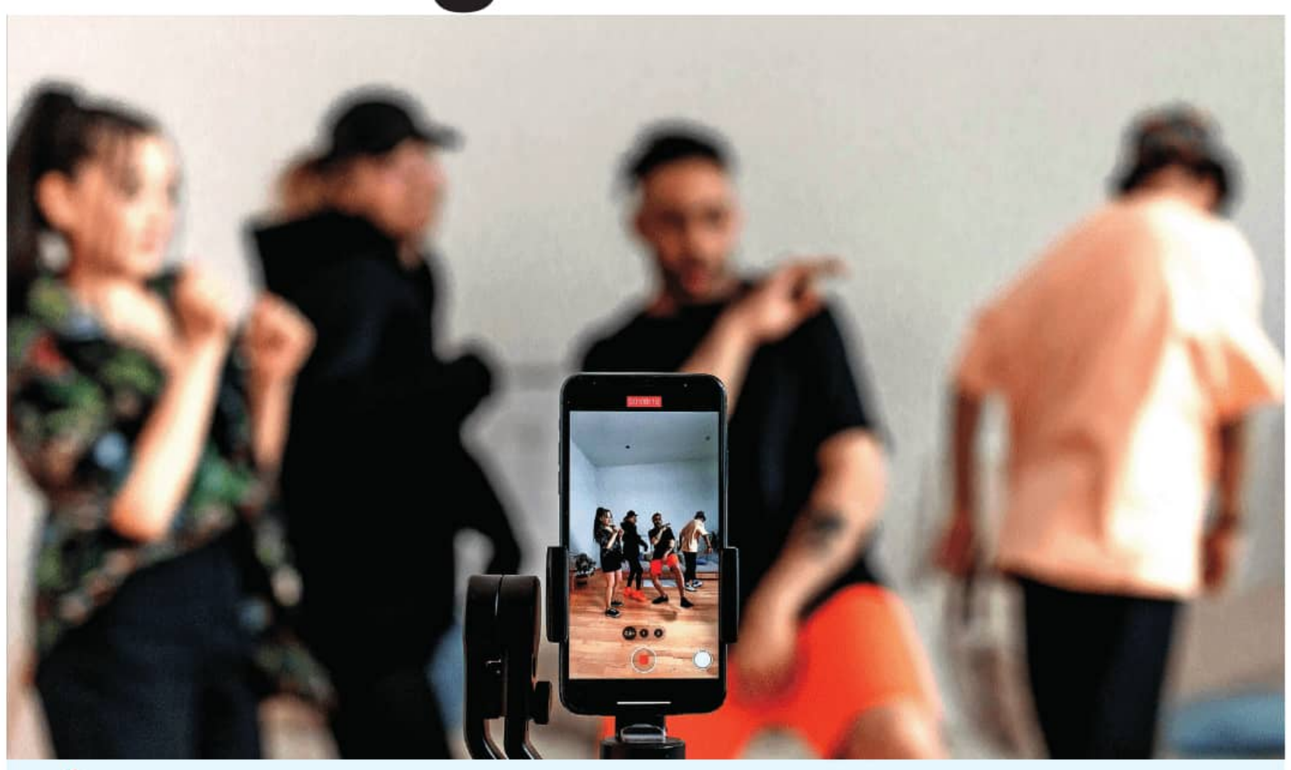

In yet another AI-driven trend, internet users are making a beeline to upload their selfies online and asking it to be turned into animated avatars that reflect their profession. For this, they give information on their professions, daily routines, and personal interests with little regard to safety of their personal biometric data and ignoring digital risks in their rush to join the viral wave. Despite several official warnings, the social pressure to participate in viral trends prevails over cyber hygiene.

These caricatures are generated by entering a harmless prompt into an AI tool, such as "create a caricature of me and my job based on everything you know about me". The outcomes are often striking and visually engaging, explaining why the trend has gone viral but producing such personalised images requires the AI system to rely on substantial amounts of user-related information.

"At present, we don't fully know how this information might be used in the future. Once data is collected, it could potentially be repurposed in other ways, or even sold and misused

—Raja Imam Kasim P, DCP Crime-2

According to police officials, AI caricature applications typically require users to upload multiple high-resolution images of their faces. In return, the platforms generate artistic renditions within minutes. DCP Crime-2 Raja Imam Kasim P warns that these uploaded images often become part of vast data pools that may be stored, shared, or even used for training artificial intelligence models without users fully understanding the implications.

"What happens with AI is that it builds a profile of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

Women can fight fires too

But state doesn't seem to think so as 83 years after fire & emergency services dept came into being, we are yet to get a single woman firefighter

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Despite the Karnataka State Fire and Emergency Services Department completing 83 years of existence, not a single woman has been appointed as a field firefighter in the State. While women across India serve in the police, armed forces and even pilot fighter aircraft, Karnataka continues to bar them from frontline firefighting roles.

The department was first established in 1942 under the administrative control of the police in Bengaluru South and North divisions. Over the decades, fire stations were expanded to Ballari, Hosapete, Mangaluru, Udupi and Raichur. After the Karnataka Fire Force Act came into force in 1964, the department began functioning independently. Today, Karnataka has 234 fire stations with an estimated workforce of around 3,000 personnel. However, women are present only in administrative roles such as accounts and clerical posts, not in active firefighting positions.

On the other hand, states and union territories such as Maharashtra, Delhi and parts of Kerala have already inducted women into field firefighting roles. In Karnataka, however, recruitment rules have not been amended to permit women to

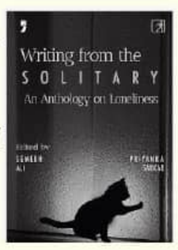
CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Alliance of voices

Alliance University will host the 2026 edition of the Alliance Literary Festival, ALF, and Alliance ONE, bringing together leading voices from cinema, public life, journalism, law and performance. **Where: Alliance University, Alliance School of Liberal Arts, Anekal; When: February 19 to 21, 9 am to 9.30 pm**

02 Isolation as inspiration



Atta Galatta is bringing a session inviting participants to explore how isolation can be transformed into powerful literary expression. The workshop focuses on the nuances of solitude and loneliness as creative catalysts. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: Feb 21, 4 pm**

03 Festive mood

The Sixth Sense, India's first and largest multidisciplinary immersive festival, conceptualised and developed by Swordfish, the creators of Echoes of Earth festival, brings together art, music, technology, and nature to rekindle connection with the natural world. **Where: Alembic City, Whitefield; When: February 5 to 22**

04 Creativity in store

Ranga Shankara returns with its signature intimate storytelling programme, Little Cloud, packed with an enchanting experience of creativity, laughter and imagination. The sessions are held for children aged 4 to 6 every Saturday and Sunday. **Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; When: Until March 15, 10 am**

05 In her shoes

Atta Galatta is hosting the launch of 'Busy Women' by Shinjini Kumar, an insightful and engaging exploration of contemporary India beyond its metropolitan centres, based on extensive travel across thirty cities and conversations with over 300 women. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: February 21, 6.30 pm**

Private bus owners call out irregularities in FC issuance

Association claims over 10,000 vehicles were granted certificates without proper checks in violation of statutory norms, urges investigation in complaint to Transport Minister

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Private bus owners' association warns that issuance of FCs without inspections poses grave threat to public safety

The Karnataka Private Bus Owners Association has alleged large-scale irregularities in the issuance of Fitness Certificates (FCs) to nearly 10,000 out-of-state vehicles over a six-month period, and has sought a high-level probe into the role of certain Inspectors of Motor Vehicles (IMV). In a complaint dated February 12, 2026, addressed to Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, the association has claimed that Fitness Certificates were issued to a substantial number of vehicles registered in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Kerala without proper physical inspection, in violation of statutory provisions. It alleged that an extraordinarily high number of out-of-state vehicles were granted Fitness Certificates within short spans of time, raising suspicion that such certificates were issued mechanically and without conducting mandatory physical inspection as required under the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

Providing month-wise data between August 2025 and January 2026, the association claimed that in August 2025 alone, 646 Fitness Certificates were issued by one officer, of which around 636 pertained to vehicles from Maharashtra and Gujarat. In September 2025, 1,168 vehicles were issued FCs, with approximately 1,149 out-of-state vehicles certified by the same officer, the letter stated.

The figures further rose in October 2025, when 1,813 vehicles were granted Fitness Certificates, including 1,802 vehicles from Gujarat and Maharashtra allegedly certified by a single officer. In November 2025, 3,383 vehicles were issued FCs by the same officer, according to the complaint. In December 2025, 2,057 Fitness Certificates were issued, and in January 2026, 955 vehicles were granted certification.

"From the above figures, it is evident that nearly 10,000 out-of-state vehicles have been issued Fitness Certificates within a span of six months," the letter said, adding that the sheer volume of certifications attributed predominantly to a single officer raises serious doubts as to whether proper physical inspection, brake testing, emission verification, structural compliance, safety equipment checks, and other statutory requirements were actually conducted. The association has contended that issuance of Fitness Certificates without proper inspection amounts to a "gross abuse of official power and dereliction of statutory duty." It warned that such actions not only undermine the credibility of the Transport Department but also pose a grave threat to public safety.

The association further said that if the allegations are found to be true, the matter could amount to a large-scale Fitness Certificate scam, involving misuse of authority, violation of statutory provisions, and possible financial irregularities.

Seeking immediate action, the association has requested the authorities to order an immediate high-level inquiry into the issuance of Fitness Certificates by the alleged officers involved. It has also urged verification of whether physical inspections were conducted in each case, examination of CCTV footage, inspection registers, Vahan portal entries and test records.

Resident allowed to put EV charger in parking slot after long legal battle

As electric vehicles steadily gain ground in the city, disputes over installing charging points in apartment complexes are also on the rise. While some are resolved amicably, others have reached Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) and even the courts. One such three-year legal battle has now ended on a positive note, with the Karnataka High Court closing a case that saw petitions, appeals and even a contempt plea.

The dispute was between the Srirama Suhana Residential Apartment Complex Association on Doddaballapura Road and flat owner Naveen Nagendra over

the installation of an EV charger in his parking slot. After hearings before both a single judge and a division bench, the association and the resident reached a settlement, allowing the charger to be installed in his designated parking space. The court disposed of the appeal and contempt petition, making it clear that since the petitioner's parking slot is in the same tower where he resides, he may install the charger as per rules, provided it does not inconvenience other residents. **— BMB**

CBSE tells students to report 30 minutes before board exams

Ahead of the Class 10 and 12 board exams starting February 17, the Central Board of Secondary Education has asked candidates to reach their examination centres at least 30 minutes before the start of the paper. While exams will begin at 10.30 am, students have been instructed to be present by 10 am, as entry will close at that time and no latecomers will be permitted inside. With over 4.6 million students from India and 26 other countries set to appear, CBSE has advised candidates to plan their travel carefully, keeping traffic, weather and possible diversions in mind. Schools have also been asked to support parents and students with clear guidance. The board has urged students to visit their centres in advance if needed and avoid last minute rush, stressing that timely reporting is key to a smooth examination process. **— BMB**

450 feeding points marked for stray dogs across city

Acting on directions from the Supreme Court of India, the Greater Bengaluru Authority has identified 450 designated spots across its five civic zones for feeding stray dogs. Rajajinagar and a few other localities have already seen boards put up marking approved feeding areas. East Zone tops the list with 150 centres, followed by Central with 90, West with 85, North with 70 and South with 55 locations. Officials say the move is aimed at balancing animal welfare with public safety and hygiene.

Authorities have made it clear that feeding must be restricted to these earmarked spots and that animal lovers must also take responsibility for keeping the area clean. Feeding is advised during non-peak hours to avoid inconvenience to pedestrians and motorists. The step comes after incidents were reported where stray dogs, drawn by random feeding on streets, allegedly attacked members of the public. The civic body says structured feeding zones will help prevent such flare-ups while ensuring the animals are cared for in an organised manner. **— BMB**

Spiritual journey

Devotees thronged Gavi Gangadhareshwara temple for Maha Shivratri, offering prayers and seeking blessings on the auspicious day

PIC: KAUSHIK JN

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******* ಶುಭ ಕೋರುವವರು *******

Shri
Vikas Rathod
President

Shri
Vishal Sagari
Foreman

Shri
Vishwanath
Telsang
Director

Shri
Bipin Tejwani
Director

Shri
Shivkumar
Aparaj
Director

SAINIKETAN CHITS Pvt. Ltd., Athani

From sparkling Sarovara to sinking swamp

Encroachments, cut saplings and broken bund expose official apathy despite crores sanctioned for revival works

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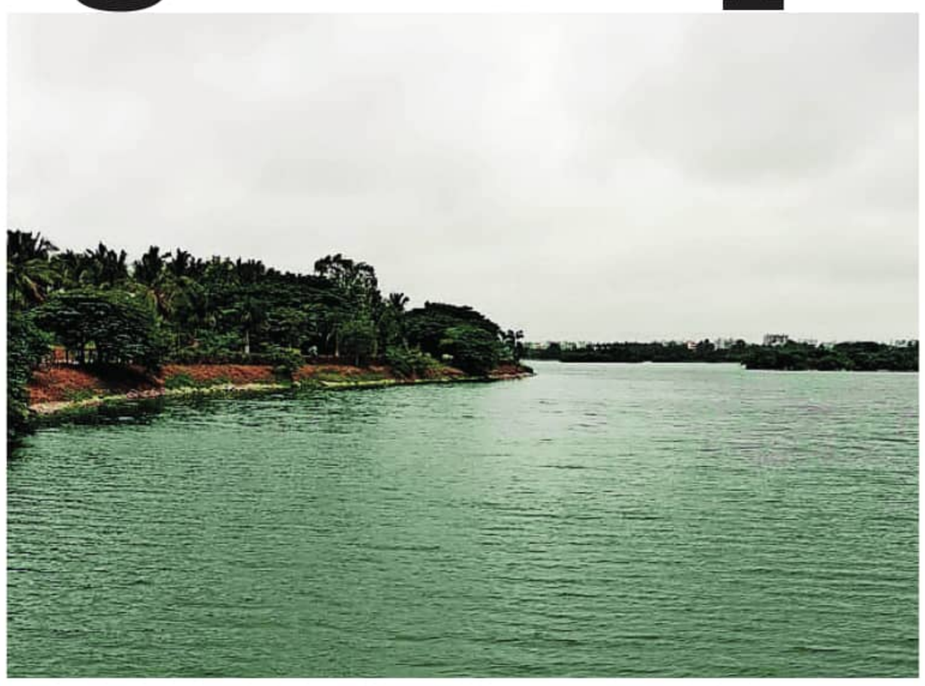
If the condition of Kalkere Lake, also known as Kanaka Sarovara, is anything to go by, it appears that the authorities concerned continue to neglect the water body for reasons best known to them. A few environmentalists and residents attribute the delay in rejuvenating the lake, which is set to join the list of dead or lost lakes in the city to the vested interests of politicians and their relatives.

Residents and lake activists said the lake was rejuvenated in 2021, but the authorities soon became oblivious to its very existence.

"I relocated to Kalkere in 2021. The lake was clean and well maintained then, but the same cannot be said now. A few makeshift homes have already come up just a few metres from the lake. Hundreds of saplings planted by volunteers were cut down, and the pathway was damaged to lay pipes. I want to know why the authorities concerned dug up the pathway, which was constructed using taxpayers' money, to lay pipes," said a resident, requesting anonymity. Bangalore Mirror published a story — Kanaka Sarovara water quality deteriorates — on May 14, 2024, explaining how sewage infiltrated the rejuvenated lake. It may be noted that the then Executive Engineer (Lakes) had said that BBMP had allocated ₹8 crore for the rejuvenation of the lake and that a work order had already been issued. However, the condition of the lake has continued to deteriorate.



Above: Kanaka Sarovara was clean and neat four years ago; Below: Now, the condition of the pathway at Kanaka Sarovara

Expressing concern over the authorities' negligence, Satish Chandra, former president of Kanakagiri Nivasigala Sangha, said that the pathway on the lake bund is full of weeds, and benches installed for visitors have become inaccessible. "There is no one to maintain the lake. The BWSSB dug up the pathway to lay pipes but did not restore it. The promised rejuvenation of the lake is yet to become a reality," he said. Demanding that the authorities rejuvenate the lake and complete the developmental works, Vasanth Gowda, a resident, said political interference has become a hurdle. "The authorities organised functions two or three times for the development of the adjacent road and the lake, but the works have yet to begin. The lake was clean and brimming with water four years ago, but now it is in a pathetic condition. I want the authorities concerned to protect and save this water body," he said.

Residents slam pipe digging, weed-choked pathways and political meddling, questioning civic accountability as pollution steadily worsens at Kalkere

Meanwhile, Executive Engineer (Lakes) CP Arpita said she was unaware of the damaged pathway and weeds. "I have not received complaints from residents about the condition of Kanaka Sarovara. I will visit the lake shortly and address the issues," she said.

However, residents and lake activists are not prepared to take the executive engineer's assurance seriously, as no effort has been made to keep the water body clean for more than two years. Will the authorities make sincere efforts to resolve the issue? Residents and activists, who have been running from pillar to post, can only wait and watch.

Valentine Crackdown: B'luru florists fined as plastic violations persist

City marshals intensify Valentine's enforcement drive, collecting hefty fines and seizing banned plastic wraps while experts push sustainable bouquet alternatives

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In a city-wide crackdown on single-use plastic during Valentine's Day, enforcement marshals carried out intensive raids on florists across Bengaluru, penalising vendors for using plastic sheets and wraps to package roses and bouquets.

According to official data from the enforcement drive conducted on February 14 and 15, marshals inspected 209 establishments across multiple zones on February 14 and 127 establishments on February 15. Over ₹1,20,600 in fines was collected on February 14 and ₹64,600 on February 15. Authorities also seized nearly 7.9 kg of banned plastic materials as of February 15 afternoon, while inspections the previous day resulted in the seizure of 74.6 kg of plastic. The Central and West zones reported the highest number of violations, with several florists found wrapping bouquets in thin plastic sheets despite repeated warnings and prior awareness campaigns. In Bengaluru Central, ₹36,100 in fines was collected on February 14 and ₹26,300 on February 15, while Bengaluru West recorded ₹43,400 on Valentine's Day and ₹15,400 the following day.

Marshals noted that many vendors continued to stock banned plastic rolls specifically for festive demand, including Valentine's Day sales. Enforcement teams observed that thin single-use plastic sheets were being used not only for aesthetic appeal but also for moisture protection.

Speaking on the enforcement, Colonel Rajbir Singh, Chief Marshal Officer of the city's civic body, said, "Surely, this year enforcement was higher as adequate awareness was given prior to the event. However, vendors continued to violate rules and had to be fined."

Odette Katrak of Beautiful Bharat said banned items should not be freely circulating and called for year-round enforcement. She noted that Valentine's Day raises concerns due to the large amount of non-biodegradable wraps and ribbons used on bouquets, which often end up in landfills as mixed waste.

Experts also highlighted improper flower disposal as a serious concern, noting that rotting flowers trapped in plastic generate methane in landfills, contributing to climate change. Awareness campaigns have emphasised segregation, with wraps going into dry waste, flowers into wet waste and floral foam into reject waste. Srikant Kanoi, Director of the Grower Flower Council of India, said the industry must shift towards biodegradable wraps, paper alternatives and compostable ribbons, adding that sustainability practices are gradually being adopted across events and hospitality sectors.

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Falling tree risk

Jeevanahalli

A hollow Gulmohar tree on Jeevanahalli Main Road near the BESCOM transformer is at risk of falling, posing a safety hazard.

Garbage strewn stretch

Krishna Rao Road

Garbage autos parked at the start of Sir A N Krishna Rao Road leave the area littered with waste daily.

Damaged road

Hospital Road

The stretch of Hospital Road between Abhinav Theatre and Avenue Road near Chickpet is heavily damaged, causing severe inconvenience.

Redefining Beauty with Confidence

In a world where appearance shapes first impressions, the right guidance can make all the difference. Dr. Amrika Seshadri, Director of Dr. Amrika's Aesthetics – Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery Center, has emerged as a leading name in cosmetic and plastic surgery. Known for her expertise and empathetic approach, she combines science, skill, and compassion to deliver treatments that enhance both beauty and self-confidence. With over 13 years of experience, she is recognised in prestigious forums such as the VK BM Health Excellence & Conclave for her contribution to the field.

Dr. Amrika,
Dr. Amrika's Aesthetics – Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery Center, Sarjapur Main Road

Comprehensive Care

Dr. Amrika is highly skilled in advanced cosmetic and reconstructive surgeries. Her expertise covers burn injury treatment, childhood scar correction, cleft lip repair, lip pigmentation enhancement (lip blush), gynecomastia surgery in men, rhinoplasty, body contouring (liposuction), breast augmentation and reduction, eyebrow microblading, post-pregnancy body rejuvenation ('Mommy Makeover'), and hair transplant procedures. She emphasises natural outcomes, ensuring post-surgery appearance complements the patient's features.

At her center in Doddakannelli, Sarjapur Main Road, she employs state-of-the-art technologies including VASER (Vibration Amplification of Sound Energy at Resonance) for body contouring, Microneedling Radio Frequency (MNRF), advanced laser systems, and Hydrafacial treatment tools. These allow precision, minimally invasive procedures with enhanced safety and faster recovery. The center operates under strict confidentiality standards, offering a safe and comfortable environment. Dr. Amrika is fluent in Kannada, English, Hindi, and Tamil, facilitating clear communication with diverse patients.

Safe Choices

Dr. Amrika advises patients to carefully verify credentials before selecting a surgeon. Many are influenced by social media videos or online promotions, which may lead to unqualified practitioners. She recommends checking academic qualifications, professional credentials, licensing, and patient reviews. To further educate the public, she runs a YouTube channel focusing on cosmetic and plastic surgery awareness.

Proven Results

A graduate of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Medical College, Bengaluru, Dr. Amrika completed her MS in General Surgery and MCh in Plastic Surgery from Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI). She has successfully performed over 1,000 surgeries, combining aesthetic precision with reconstructive expertise. Her center on Sarjapur Road continues to provide world-class cosmetic care, catering to patients seeking both medical and aesthetic enhancement.

Accessible Care

Believing beauty is a right for all, Dr. Amrika also provides EMI options for select treatments, making high-quality cosmetic care more accessible. She stresses that cosmetic surgery is not only for celebrities but for anyone seeking confidence and self-improvement.

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Instagram: @DrAmrikaAesthetics

Dr. A. C. Shanmugham: Devoted to Patient Care

Rajarajeswari Medical College and Hospital (RRMCH), under the guidance of Founder-Chairman Dr. A. C. Shanmugham, has been honoured with the prestigious Service Excellence in Urology award. The accolade recognises the exceptional service rendered by the hospital's Urology Department, which was accepted on behalf of the institution by Major General Dr. Srinath, a distinguished medical professional representing the college at the event VK BM Health Excellence & Conclave.

Patient Commitment

With a capacity of approximately 1,400 beds, RRMCH in Bengaluru is widely recognised for its high-quality treatment and compassionate patient care. Under the leadership of Dr. A. C. Shanmugham, the hospital has performed over 1.5 lakh free surgeries and provided dialysis treatment to more than 1 lakh patients, reflecting its deep commitment to community health and service.

Military Distinction

Major General Dr. Srinath, who accepted the award, served in the Indian Army for 36 consecutive years and is a recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal from the President of India. After joining the Indian Army in 1981, he contributed his expertise across command hospitals in New Delhi, Bengaluru, Pune, Leh-Ladakh, and Udhampur, rising to the position of Senior Consultant in Surgery and earning widespread recognition for his dedicated service.

Innovative Methods

Since his appointment as Head of the Urology Department at RRMCH in 2018, Dr. Srinath has significantly expanded the unit, introducing modern technologies and advanced treatment procedures. These include Endo-Urology and Laparoscopic procedures, with a particular focus on kidney surgeries. Under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, these services have been made accessible to a wider population, ensuring affordable care while maintaining high clinical standards. The department's achievements culminated in the conferment of the Service Excellence in Urology award.

Educational Leadership

Dr. Srinath emphasises staying updated with the latest medical advancements. "The technology I learned as a student is now outdated. To teach today's Generation Z medical students effectively, we must constantly upgrade our knowledge and tools," he explains. He continues to impart medical education to students at RRMCH, integrating modern instruments and techniques to provide both practical and theoretical training.

Healing Commitment

Dr. A. C. Shanmugham, the visionary founder of Rajarajeswari Medical College and Hospital, has built the institution on principles of service, compassion, and excellence. Located on Mysore Road, Bengaluru, RRMCH continues to set benchmarks in healthcare delivery while nurturing medical education for future generations.

Dr. A. C. Shanmugham,
Founder-Chairman, Rajarajeswari Medical College and Hospital

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Tiger rescues spark conservation clash in villages on forest fringes

NTCA questions scientific basis of increased tiger relocations as forest department defends interventions amid rising conflict fears among villagers

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Growing tiger encounters near Bandipur, Nagarahole and BRT reserves have sparked scrutiny over rescue practices, exposing tensions between conservation science, field realities, and the urgent safety concerns of forest fringe communities

With tiger sightings rising along forest fringe villages in southern Karnataka, a fresh debate has broken out over how wildlife authorities are responding on the ground. Over the past three to four months, rescue operations in the landscapes of Bandipur Tiger Reserve, Nagarahole Tiger Reserve and BRT Tiger Reserve have drawn objections from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), which has sought clarification from the Karnataka Forest Department over alleged violations of guidelines.

For residents living on the edge of these forests, tiger movement is no longer a distant possibility. Farmers speak of cattle kills, paw marks near fields and tense nights when the forest seems closer than ever. Recent months have also seen fatal encounters. Between November and December 2025, four people lost their lives in tiger-related incidents in areas around Bandipur and Nagarahole. In one tragic case in late December, a forest staff member was killed inside Bandipur, prompting temporary suspension of safari operations in the reserve.

Faced with mounting pressure from villagers and local groups, forest officials intensified rescue and relocation efforts. According to official figures cited in the communication, 27 tigers have been rescued across the three reserves in recent months, including 13 cubs. This scale of intervention has raised concerns in New Delhi.

In a letter dated January 27, NTCA Inspector General of Forests CM Shivakumar sought an explanation from the Chief Wildlife Warden of Karnataka, questioning whether such a large number of tiger rescues is scientifically justified. The authority noted that tiger populations in these reserves remain within their assessed carrying capacity. Bandipur National Park has around 110 tigers, roughly 48 percent of its estimated capacity of 229. Nagarahole National Park has about 135 tigers, or nearly 79 percent of its capacity of 170. BRT Tiger Reserve has 29 tigers, about 36 percent of its potential capacity of 81. The NTCA stated there is no scientific evidence of an abnormal population spike that would warrant widespread rescues.

The letter also flagged procedural concerns. As per guidelines, tigers are to be rescued only in cases of repeated conflict or immediate threat to human life. Night-time operations are considered risky and are generally discouraged. One instance cited involves a male tiger rescued at night in Chamarajanagar taluk in December, which the authority claims was not directly involved in any conflict.

Forest officials, however, maintain that every rescue was carried out with approval from senior authorities and in response to real-time field conditions. They assert the animals are safe and that the primary aim has been to prevent escalation of conflict. A senior forest official said that as tiger populations recover and expand, encounters at the forest edge are likely to increase, and the challenge lies not just in rescuing animals or protecting people, but in deciding when intervention helps and when restraint serves conservation better.

Action on abandoned vehicles

Due to the increased number of abandoned and unclaimed vehicles rising across Bengaluru, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has launched a drive to clear them by auctioning the vehicles to authorised scrap dealers. For years, such vehicles have occupied parking lots, bylanes and city spaces, worsening congestion and creating safety risks. Residents say that during the monsoon, these idle vehicles often turn into breeding grounds for rodents, mosquitoes and stray animals, posing health concerns. Under the drive, identified vehicles will be towed away and handed over to scrap dealers for dismantling and recycling into reusable materials. Officials said the operation will begin in the most affected localities. — BMB

BESCOM officials' drunken duty scenes

Snapshot of BESCOM (Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited) officials drinking in a roadside dhaba in Gudibande. Taken from X.

A few Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM officials have found themselves in trouble after a video of them checking files of the department sitting at a roadside eatery in Gudibande along with liquor bottles and glasses was posted on X. Netizens expressed dismay at documents with personal information being treated so lightly. Some have taken to social media to demand an explanation for this irresponsible behaviour and seeking action. They have demanded stricter work ethics and CCTV coverage of organisations where public personal information is accessible. — BMB

Two killed in factory tank blast

Two people were killed and four others seriously injured after a chemical storage tank exploded at a factory near Karekatte village on Sunday, police said. The blast occurred while the unit was in the process of relocating its operations. Police sources said two workers died on the spot, while the injured were shifted to the Mandya Institute of Medical Sciences for treatment. Authorities said the factory had been moving materials to a new site for some time, and the accident happened when the tank was being cleared. An investigation is underway. Locals have flagged the unit's safety record, recalling a toxic gas leak in 2022 that damaged nearby crops, killed two dogs, and affected residents' health. Following protests by farmers and intervention by MLA and officials, operations were halted and owners shifted. — BMB

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Poetry on Wheels

Bengaluru witnessed a literary ride like never before as the Dasarahalli Assembly Constituency unit of Kannada Sahitya Parishat hosted a unique poets' meet inside a moving BMTC bus on Saturday. Bengaluru Urban District Kannada Sahitya Parishat President M Prakashamurthy called it the first such initiative in the Parishat's history and stressed the need to take literature closer to the public. The bus rolled through Eighth Mile, Jalahalli Cross, Yeshwanthpur, Malleswaram, Navarang, Nandini Layout, Hegganahalli Cross and Rajagopalnagar before returning to Chikkabanavara. More than 25 poets recited their works as curious passengers paused to listen, turning an ordinary commute into a travelling celebration of Kannada verse.

Cash Incentive

Mysuru district is turning the fight against child marriage into a contest, offering ₹25,000 to gram panchayats that have reported zero cases in the past three years. Of the 268 panchayats, only those officially declared child marriage-free by their gram sabhas can apply, backed by police verification and proof of awareness drives and girls sent back to school. "We want to recognise villages that have stayed vigilant and prevented child marriages," says District Child Protection Officer T Yogesh. The move gained significance as 225 child marriages were stopped and 59 cases booked in 2024–25. The winning panchayat at the district level will move to the state round, with the larger aim of making Mysuru child marriage-free.

Wrong Landing

A brief moment of confusion and embarrassment unfolded in Lingsugur recently when Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's helicopter landed at the wrong helipad, triggering panic among officials. The VT Company helicopters were arranged for the Chief Minister and Minister Satish Jarkiholi to attend the wedding of MLC Sharanagouda Patil Bayyapur's son. While officials waited at a helipad set up on private land along the Lingsugur–Raichur main road, the helicopter that landed there carried Minister Jarkiholi instead of the Chief Minister, leaving the administration flustered. Meanwhile, the Chief Minister's helicopter touched down at a separate helipad built for a BJP MLA, where no officials or security personnel were present. Siddaramaiah reportedly alighted from the helicopter alone and stood waiting without any security cover, a lapse that is said to have left the Chief Minister visibly upset.

Viral Protest

Frustrated by years of empty promises and the Kadaba Town Panchayat's "no funds" excuse, residents launched a satirical "Begging Campaign" to repair the dilapidated road. After a previous boycott was called off following a government assurance that never materialised, locals have now flooded social media with posters asking for donations to fix the stretch themselves. While officials claim that major grants under the Nagarothana scheme won't arrive until 2027 and only ₹2 lakh is available for minor patches, the villagers remained steadfast in their sarcastic fundraising drive to highlight the administrative apathy that has left their commute in shambles.

Gun-toting Act

In a scene straight out of a gangster flick, M Patel, a prominent Congress leader and close aide of Afzalpur MLA MY Patil, has landed in controversy after a video of him dancing with a gun went viral. The footage showed Patel taking centre stage at a wedding in Kalaburagi, waving a firearm while busting moves to the hit track 'Dhurandhar' in front of a cheering crowd. As the video continues to trend, the Congress leader's action-packed dance has left the party red-faced. — Sridhar Vivan

Missing B'luru student found dead in California

Local authorities in California discovered the body of 22-year-old Bengaluru student Saketh Sreenivasaiah at Lake Anza in Tilden Regional Park near the Berkeley Hills, days after he was reported missing on February 12. Saketh, who was pursuing a Master's in Product Development at the University of California, Berkeley, had been the subject of a search following his disappearance.

The Consulate General of India expressed deep regrets and condolences to his family in a statement on X on February 15, 2026. The deceased was residing in Srigandhada Kaval in Bengaluru with his family prior to moving to the US to pursue higher education. Following an unsuccessful search, his roommate, Baneet Singh, promptly lodged an official missing person complaint with the Berkeley Police Department and stayed in constant contact with his parents. Singh recalled signs of distress in the weeks leading up to the disappearance, while expressing regret for dismissing what he believes were a cry for help from his late friend.

Sreenivasaiah's family sought urgent intervention from the Union and the Karnataka government. They reached out to the Chief Minister of Karnataka alongside the Ministry of External Affairs. The parents expressed deep distress over the disappearance of their son and highlighted that he was enrolled in an estimable graduate programme. The officials involved are currently working with the local authorities to recover the body and bring it back to his family. **–BMB**

Five killed as car loses control, rams bus

On Sunday, five youths were killed after their car lost control, jumped the divider, overturned twice and crashed into a KSRTC bus near the Jindal flyover under the Madanayakanahalli police limits. The impact left the car mangled, while the bus sustained front-end damage. None of the 42 passengers on board were injured. The deceased have been identified as Lalith (23), Harshith (20), Durga Prasad (25), Keshav (21) and Dhanush (18). Four died on the spot, while the critically injured driver succumbed during treatment. The bodies were shifted to Nelamangala Government Hospital as grieving families gathered in shock. Police have registered a case and launched an investigation. **–BMB**

CRIME FILES

Man accuses duo of stealing his credentials

A 26-year-old private firm employee from Rajajinagar, identified as Sridhar Ramesh K, has filed a complaint with the North Division of CEN Police against two women who allegedly misused his bank account and SIM card to commit cyber fraud. The two women allegedly befriended the victim and obtained his personal details without his knowledge. They then used his identification documents and online logins to carry out the cybercrime.

As per the police, the two accused, identified as Nandini and Deepthi, have been booked under Sections 66(C) (Identity Theft) and 66(D) (Cheating by personation using computer resources) of the IT Act, 2000, alongside Section 318(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023. Further investigation is underway. **–BMB**

Family booked in alleged dowry death

A 27-year-old woman, identified as G Meganashree from Srirampura, has allegedly died by suicide at her marital home in Tiruvallur, Tamil Nadu, on Friday over a dowry dispute. Her mother lodged a complaint with the RK Pet police, who have booked six individuals, which includes her husband, Gunasekaran (35). The couple was living in the town together with their 3-year-old daughter and were going through a strained marriage, as per police officials.

The deceased had visited her parents in Bengaluru, after which she returned to her husband with their daughter. On Friday, her body was found around 11.30 pm at her residence. The body was moved to Tiruttani Government Hospital for a post-mortem. After the procedural autopsy, the body was handed over to the family, who have returned to Bengaluru. A case under Sections 85, 108, and 194 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita has been registered against the husband and his family. **–BMB**

72 children rescued from begging

In an encouraging act by the Bengaluru City Police to mark Valentine's Day, 72 children were taken into refuge, and rehabilitation procedures are underway. These children, who were engaged in begging in major circles and hotspots in Bengaluru city, were identified by the City Police with the help of NGOs, Child Protection Services, Central Crime Branch, Social Welfare Department, and Health Department. They conducted a joint operation under the vigil of the Commissioner of Police.

The children have been given the needed medical attention by the doctors and have been provided with meals and clothing. The parents of these children are yet to be identified, and these organisations alongside the police are seeking any information regarding their families.

Across different zones of Bengaluru, officials have identified 44 boys and 28 girls, who have so far been provided with essential facilities to ensure their proper growth and security. **–BMB**

Procedural concerns raised over luxury car seizure

The Karnataka High Court has stayed further proceedings in a criminal case concerning the alleged irregular registration of a Lamborghini Huracán Evo, while strongly questioning the manner in which the vehicle was seized.

The case arose after a Motor Vehicle Inspector filed a complaint alleging that forged documents had been used to secure registration of the high-end car, resulting in evasion of substantial tax dues. Based on the complaint, police registered an FIR invoking provisions relating to forgery and cheating under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The authorities claim that discrepancies in the paperwork caused a revenue loss running into several lakhs of rupees. During the hearing, the High Court expressed serious reservations about the process adopted by the officer in taking custody of the vehicle. The court questioned how an officer could enter private premises and remove property without clearly demonstrating statutory backing. The bench further cautioned that officials must be mindful of the consequences of overstepping their authority.

IN HIGH COURT

At the same time, the court permitted the vehicle owner to approach the jurisdictional magistrate seeking interim custody of the car, directing that any such plea be considered on its own merits and in accordance with law.

The State, defending the seizure, submitted that the alleged offence involved tax evasion and that once a crime had been registered, authorities were empowered to take the vehicle into custody as part of the investigation.

Taking note of the competing submissions, the High Court has sought a detailed response from the State clarifying the legal basis for the seizure and whether due process was followed before initiating criminal proceedings. Until further orders, the court has stayed further investigation in the matter. **–BMB**

'Insurance liability requires clear proof of involvement'

The Karnataka High Court has directed the owner of a motorcycle to pay increased compensation to a man injured in a road accident, after finding that liability had been wrongly fixed on the insurance company.

The case arose from an appeal challenging an award passed by a Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT). The injured claimant had sought enhancement of compensation, arguing that the amount granted earlier was inadequate considering the injuries suffered and the impact on his livelihood.

While examining the appeal, the High Court closely reviewed the evidence relating to the involvement of the vehicles in the accident. The bench observed that the material on record pointed to what it described as a "clear case of implication of another vehicle having insurance." In view of this finding, the court concluded that fastening liability on the insurer of the motorcycle was legally unsustainable.

The judges emphasised that insurance companies can be made liable only when there is clear proof that the insured vehicle was involved in the accident in the manner alleged. If the evidence suggests the involvement of a different insured vehicle, the insurer cannot be compelled to satisfy the award. Accordingly, the High Court exonerated the insurance company from paying compensation in the present case.

At the same time, the court ensured that the injured claimant was not deprived of just relief. Reassessing the facts, including the nature of the injuries, treatment undergone, and other relevant factors, the bench determined that the compensation awarded by the tribunal required enhancement. It directed that the increased amount be paid by the motorcycle owner. Courts, the bench observed, cannot ignore discrepancies in the record or misdirected claims against insurers. **–BMB**

Recruitment rules not amended to permit women to apply for field posts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

apply for these posts. A senior official said, "Women have not yet been recruited for firefighting duties in the State Fire Force. Necessary amendments to the recruitment rules have to be made at the government level. We will make all required efforts to initiate the process," he said.

Calls for equality

Experts and activists argue that the exclusion is outdated and inconsistent with the State's commitment to gender equality. During fire accidents and rescue operations, women victims are often carried out by male personnel. Advocates say trained women firefighters could handle such situations with greater sensitivity and efficiency, particularly in cases involving pregnant women, children and other vulnerable groups.

"Women have already proven their capabilities in uniformed services across the country. Physical standards and equipment design may require some adjustments, but that cannot be a reason to deny opportunity," said Snehalatha K, a women's rights activist. "With appropriate modifications in training and testing standards, inclusion is very much possible. It will also help achieve gender equality within the department," she added.

Recruitment and Cadre Rules in government departments are typically revised over time to reflect changing needs. In several sectors, amendments have enabled women's entry into previously male-dominated roles. However, similar reforms have not yet been introduced in the Fire and Emergency Services Department.

"As debates on gender representation gain momentum, the absence of women firefighters in Karnataka stands out sharply. For many observers, the question is no longer about capability, but about policy reform and administrative will," added Ramya K, a college student.

Pay premium price for sunlight

A girl looking to rent a house in HSR Layout got the shock of her life when she saw an ad quoting the rent as Rs 80,000 because the house had ample sunlight. Following the home-seeker Anu's post, netizens chipped in with their similar experiences.

Many stated that they too have faced such irrelevant, unexplained demands by property owners. They have also said that this is a different type of extortion which is not justifiable as monthly EMIs for a purchased property are of lesser amount. Property owners are taking advantage of basic requirements like parking, ventilation, proximity to market and workplaces.

HSR Layout, which is considered to house so-called premium accommodation, is a sought-after locality amongst people looking for comfort and luxury. Netizens opined that such skyrocketing rentals deter them from seeking any and staying in a safe, comfortable environment.

Since Bengaluru is already branded for being the second most congested city in the world in terms of traffic and poor public transport connectivity, renters are finding it difficult to make ends meet. **BMB**

Split wide open

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

you based on what you share. Users tend to reveal a lot about themselves to the system. At present, we don't fully know how this information might be used in the future. Once data is collected, it could potentially be repurposed in other ways, or even sold and misused," adds Kasim.

He warned that personal data is extremely valuable and precious. "If individuals want to protect themselves, they must protect their personal data too. They must be cautious about how they use digital tools and apps. For instance, the Epstein files has shown that sooner or later, data comes out. In this case, all the victims' data is compromised and even some celebrities have been exposed."

According to Chetan Anand, National Cyber Security Scholar and Cybercrime Intervention Officer, people are increasingly sharing a lot of personal information by themselves through social media. "However, when viral trends such as AI-generated caricatures encourage users to create content using tools like ChatGPT and then share it again on social media. While doing this, AI requires a prompt that includes a lot of personal information.

And if people are not satisfied with the result or feel it is not accurate, they continue adding more context and more personal details revealing even more about themselves in the process. In doing so, they may unknowingly supply enormous personal data, effectively helping to train AI systems with sensitive information about themselves." Kasim P said though the Data Protection Act is now in place, one of the major issues lies in its implementation. "In many cases, users themselves fail to properly secure the systems where their data is stored. When there are vulnerabilities, cybercriminals can exploit them to steal information through hacking and other means."

"Apart from hacking, personal data is also collected in everyday situations. For instance, shopping websites and retail complexes gather customer information, often including phone numbers during billing. While this may seem routine, such data can later be stored, shared, or even sold without the customer's knowledge.

There is often no transparency about whether this information is securely protected. The concern is that personal data can reveal significant details about an individual, right from purchasing habits to contact information which can then be used to profile or target them," Kasim said.

Cyber experts say uploading such information to AI tools can result in losing control over your biometric data. "A person's face is a unique form of biometric identification. Once it is uploaded, there is often little transparency about how long the data will be stored, who may gain access to it, or how it might be used or shared in the future.

Uploaded images may be used to train AI models, support facial recognition systems, or be repurposed in ways you never explicitly agreed to, often hidden within lengthy terms and conditions. There will be data breaches and leaks. Unlike a password, biometric information cannot simply be changed or reset. This can also result in deepfake situations or identity misuse risks," Chetan Anand said.

Cybercrime officials advise citizens to exercise caution before uploading personal photographs to unknown platforms. They recommend checking privacy policies, understanding how data will be stored and used, and avoiding applications that demand excessive permissions.

Experts also stress the importance of maintaining basic cyber hygiene practices, including using secure networks and limiting the sharing of sensitive personal information.

Photoshoot turns tragic

A toddler drowned in an artificial pond at Shire Studio in Giddenahalli near Madanayakanahalli, where his mother had gone for a photoshoot with her friend.

The two pregnant women had gone there for a maternity shoot when three-year-old Laxveer strolled into the pond.

When the woman, Swati, noticed that her son was missing, she looked around and saw her son's clothes floating in the pond. The child was declared dead on arrival at a nearby hospital.

Her husband, who was on work in the US, has returned. The body has been taken for post-mortem, and details have been furnished to FSL; the cause of death is yet to be determined. **BMB**

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mayavan V S/o.Venkatachalam K, residing at 2043, Prestige Gulmohar, Kalkere Main Rd, Jayanthi Nagar, Horamavu, Bengaluru – 560043 wish to change my name from Mayavan Venkitachalam to Mayavan Venkatachalam vide affidavit dtd: 14/02/2026 sworn before notary Uday Kumar K, Blr.

I, Mayavan V S/o.Venkatachalam K, residing at 2043, Prestige Gulmohar, Kalkere Main Rd, Jayanthi Nagar, Horamavu, Bengaluru – 560043 wish to change my spouse name from Kalpana Mayavan to Kalpana Annadurai vide affidavit dtd: 14/02/2026 sworn before notary Uday Kumar K, Blr.

I, Piyarijan Mohamed Imtaz R/o 1232,8th Cross,2nd Main , R K Hedge Nagar B'lore-560077 have changed my name to IMTIYAZ.

I, Irayya Girimallayya Kadadevar, S/o Giramallayya Kadadevar, R/o T2-701, Purva Skydale Apts, Silver County Road, Kudlu Village, Bengaluru - 560068 have changed my name to Irayya Kadadevar for all purposes.

I vidhya suresh kumar W/o D suresh kumar R/o Bangalore I have changed my name from vidhya jayapaul to vidhya suresh kumar

I, Damodar, S/o Narasaiah Naidu Battala, R/at No.528, 9th Cross, Bhuvaneshwari Nagar, BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore South, Bangalore-560085, have changed my name to DAMODARA NAIDU, vide affidavit dt: 14.02.2026 before notary Devaraja E, B.lore.

I Madhu M N S/O, Nanjundegowda R/o No,30/3 2nd Cross,2nd Main Road,govindarajanagar, Bangaloore - 560040,karnataka have changed my name to Manjegowda.

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GUJARAT/RAJASTHAN* 12/16*/25 DAYS MAR: 6*, 20
KASHMIR WITH TULIP GARDEN 6 DAYS MAR: 29, APR: 3, 8, 13, 18
AMRITSAR VAISHNODEVI SRINAGAR 16 DAYS MAR: 20, 24 APR: 9,K 16, 23
OMKARESHWAR MAHAKALESHWAR 8 DAYS MAR: 9, 17
PURI KONARK/DARJEELING GANGTOK* 6/7* MAR: 17, 31, APR: 7, 13*, 14, 20, 21
NEPAL WITH MUKHINATH 13 DAYS MAR: 5 APR: 2, 12, 23
KASHI GAYA PRAYAG/HARIDWAR* 11/16* DAYS MAR: 22, 22* APR: 11, 17*, 20*, 26 27* MAY: 1, 3*, 7, 13*, 17, 25
SHIMLA KULLU MANALI/NAINITAL CORBETT* 15/8* DAYS MAR: 15*, 22* APR: 1, 1*, 8*, 15, 15*, 22*

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Ishan Kishan innings put India in driver's seat; pacers & spinners finish the job

Clash of the rivals ends in India win

1. Tilak Varma, right, and captain Suryakumar Yadav celebrate the wicket of Pakistan's Shadab Khan; **2.** Ishan Kishan plays a shot during during the match between India and Pakistan, at R Premadasa Stadium, in Colombo, Sri Lanka on Sunday; **3.**India's Axar Patel celebrates with Ishan Kishan and captain Suryakumar Yadav after the dismissal of Pakistan's Usman Khan

India recorded a 61-run victory over Pakistan in the T20 World Cup here on Sunday for another dominant victory over the arch-rivals in ICC events. Ishan Kishan made a high-quality 77 off 40 balls on a challenging surface to take India to 175 for seven.

The total proved to be more than enough for Pakistan who folded up for 114 in 18 overs. Both Indian pacers and spinners produced timely wickets to decimate the opposition.

Jasprit Bumrah (2/17) and Axar Patel (2/19) were the stand out bowlers for India.

Put in to bat, Kishan took the game away from Pakistan despite the fall of Abhishek Sharma in the first over bowled by Salman Ali Agha.

India 175/7 (20)

Pakistan 114 (18)

The other Indian batters found it tough to get the boundaries against the Pakistan spinners. Agha employed pace for just two overs in the innings. India captain Suryakumar Yadav scored 32 off 27 balls. Off-spinner Saim Ayub was the pick of the Pakistan bowlers, ending with three wickets for 25 runs in four overs.

Brief scores: India 175/7 in 20 overs (Ishan Kishan 77; Saim Ayub 3/25). Pakistan all out 114 in 18 overs (Usman Khan 44; Jasprit Bumrah 2/17, Axar Patel 2/19, Varun Chakaravarthy 2/17). **– PTI**

Today's match

Afghanistan	V/S	UAE
11.00 am		
England	V/S	Italy
03.00 pm		
Sri Lanka	V/S	Australia
07.00 pm		

West Indies thrash Nepal to enter Super Eights in style

Jason Holder's four-fer and skipper Shai Hope's 61 off 44 balls helped West Indies defeat Nepal by nine wickets in match 25 of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Sunday as the Caribbean side became the first team to enter the Super Eights. Nepal are officially eliminated from the race of Super Eights.

The Shai Hope-led Windies chased down a modest target of 134 runs in just 15.2 overs to secure a comfortable win over the Asian nation.

Brandon King (22 off 17 balls) and Hope (61 not out off 44 balls) added 43 runs for the first wicket. After that, Shimron Hetmyer (46 not out off 32 balls) joined Hope and took the Windies past the line comfortably.

Earlier, the West Indies opted to bowl after winning the toss and started their bowling with spinner Akeal Hosein.

Kushal Bhurtel and Aasif Sheikh opened the innings for Nepal. It was a messy start for Nepal as they lost Kushal Bhurtel on the score of one to Hosein on the fifth ball of the very first over of the match.

The captain Rohit Paudel was sent back to the pavilion for just five runs in the fourth over, after getting hit on the pad for lbw by Matthew Forde. The Rhinos lost their third wicket in the powerplay to Jason Holder in the form of Aasif Sheikh (11), who hit a couple of boundaries at the start.

Nepal crumbled to 22 runs for the loss of three crucial wickets at the end of powerplay. Following the powerplay, Aarif Skeikh was dismissed for two runs by in-form bowler Jason Holder.

Players greet each other at the end of the match between Nepal and West Indies in Mumbai on Sunday

Nepal was 46-5 in the 11th over after Lokesh Bam's dismissal at the tally of 13 runs by Shamar Joseph. A small partnership of 23 runs took place between Dipendra Singh Airee and Gulsan Jha for the sixth wicket before Gulsan was cleaned up by Roston Chase at 11 runs.

Dipendra was the only positive from Nepal's innings. He played a major role in the most crucial partnership of 54 runs for the seventh wicket with Sompal Kami. The partnership ended when Dipendra was dismissed by Holder for 58 runs off 47 balls. Nepal ended the innings at 133/8. **–ANI**

Nepal 133/8 (20)

West Indies 134/2 (15.2)

Sanjay's 68, bowlers seal 31-run win as USA stay alive

Sanjay Krishnamurthi's explosive unbeaten half-century followed by a disciplined bowling show powered USA to a crucial 31-run win over Namibia, in a must-win Group C clash here on Sunday, keeping their slim Super Eights hopes alive.

With back-to-back victories, USA finished the group stage on four points and are on third place behind India and Pakistan as they remain in contention for a place in the next round from Group A, though they will depend on other results.

Opting to bat, skipper Monank Patel set the tone with a fluent 30-ball 52 before Krishnamurthi hammered an unbeaten 68 off 33 balls to lift USA to their highest-ever T20 World Cup total of 199/4, also the second-highest total by an Associate team at the men's T20 World Cup.

In reply, Namibia were restricted to 168/6 despite a strong start given by Louren Steenkamp (58 off 39 balls; 5x4, 3x6).

The Namibian opener Steenkamp provided early fireworks, especially in a 20-run fifth over when he smashed Ali Khan for two fours and a six.

But USA struck back immediately as Shadley van Schalkwyk dismissed Jan Frylinck (19), who miscued one straight back to the bowler. Namibia maintained their attacking approach with Steenkamp finding solid support in Jan Nicol Loftie-Eaton.

The duo added 45 runs off 31 balls, keeping the required rate under control.

United States' captain Monank Patel, right, and Mohammad Mohsin, center, celebrates after their win against Namibia in Chennai on Sunday

Loftie-Eaton impressed with innovative strokes, including reverse sweeps and inside-out shots, as Namibia reached 97 for one at the halfway mark, needing 103 from the last 10 overs.

Loftie-Eaton ended the 10th over in style with a superb reverse sweep off Milind Kumar, but a smart bowling change from Monank turned the game.

He brought back Saurabh Netravalkar (1/27), who dismissed Loftie-Eaton as the batter attempted another reverse sweep but found Shubham Ranjane at short third man. Soon after, Steenkamp brought up a 33-ball fifty but fell in the next over with another clever move by Monank introducing Ranjane's medium pace as it paid off as Steenkamp miscued an off-cutter. **–PTI**

USA 199/4 (20)

Namibia 168/6 (20)

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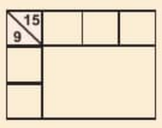
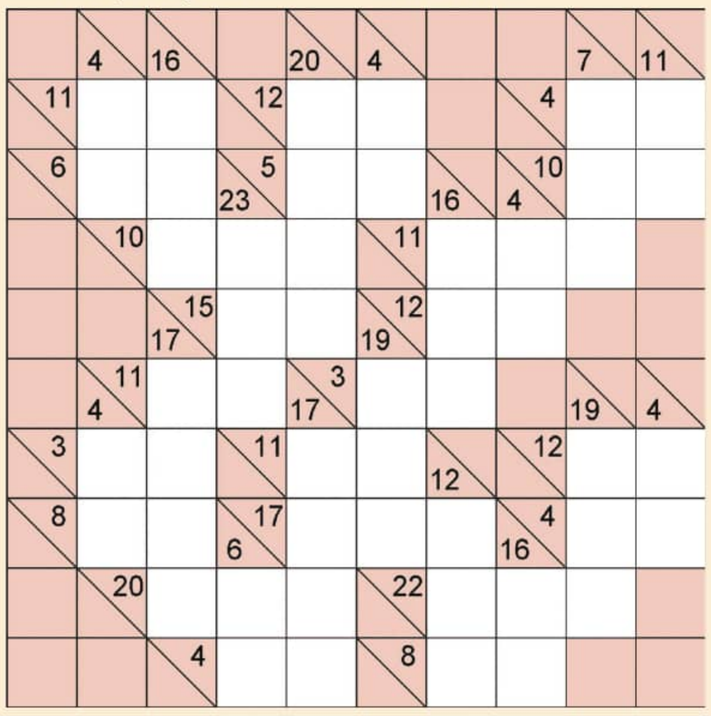
Kakuro

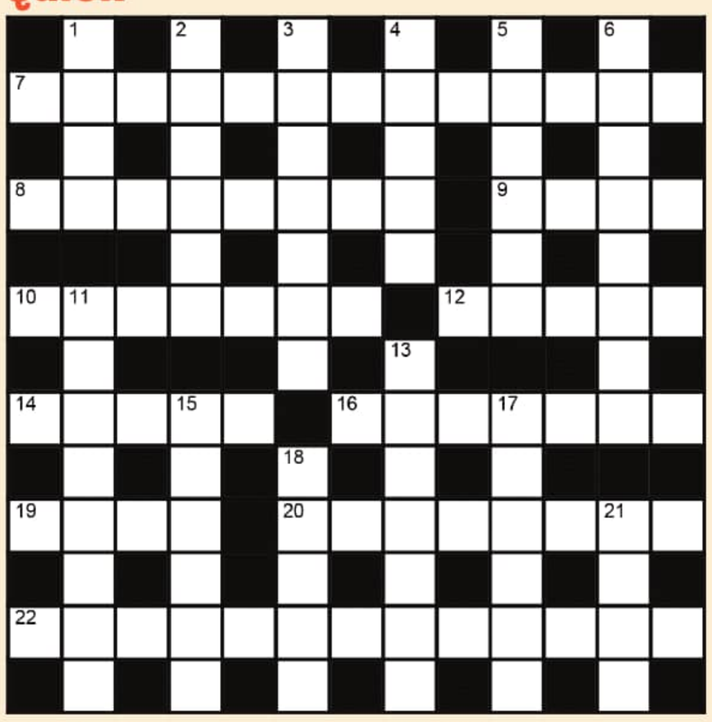
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Letting down (13)
8 Sleep or latency (8)
9 Musical work (4)
10 Threw out (7)
12 Guwahati locale (5)
14 Cleopatra's country (5)
16 Clipped or cut-sheep's woolly hair, for example (7)
19 Throb or pulsate? (4)
20 Strive (8)
22 Feature of flowering nut tree (6,7)

DOWN

1 Large luxurious car (4)
2 Runway's surface (6)
3 Tool for turning nut on bolt, for example (7)
4 Records (5)
5 Backless seats (6)
6 Cruel (8)
11 Where in Karnataka Shiravati River drops 253 meters (3,5)
13 Choir music (7)
15 An expression of deep feeling (6)
17 Eighth month (6)
18 Apart or aloof, distant (5)
21 A kind of noose (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: S EQUALS T

AIPSPLVNAIO JW SVXSI.
SID RJZDUN JW SVXSI
SMDZSO-EPXV SJUDW
ADV WDRPZT.

Linemaro

I am bad in English but I can tell you the much I know: I love you

Mindchow

You were born with wings. Why prefer to crawl through life?

Joke of the day

I moved to New York for my health. I am paranoid, and New York was the only place where my fears were justified

Loop

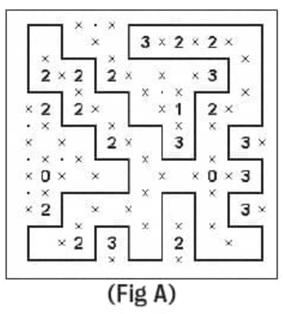
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

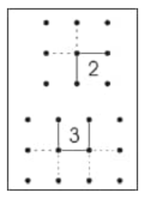
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

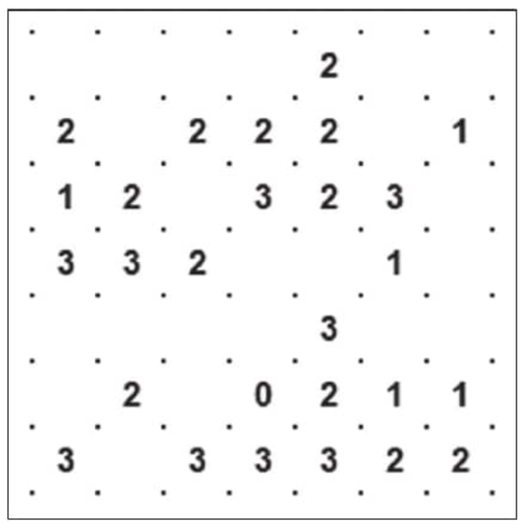
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



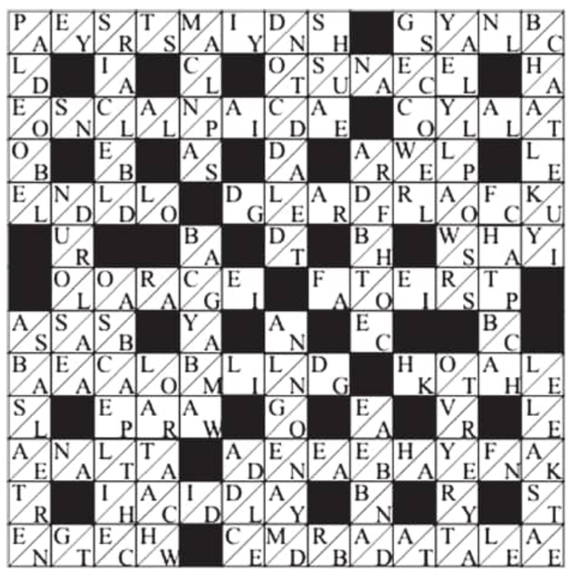
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3 U	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

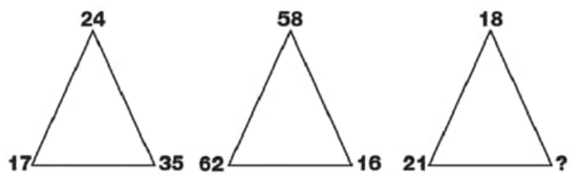
1 Dusts; 6 Mr Hut;
7 Ceria; 8 Nepal;
9 Wells

DOWN

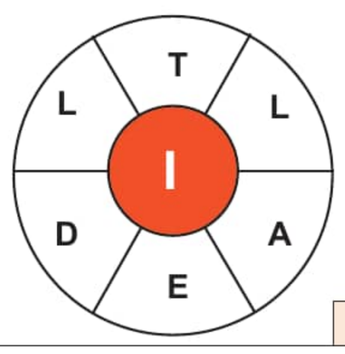
1 Pests; 2 The WR;
3 Inure; 4 Claud;
5 Malls

Mensapuzzle

Which number is missing from the last triangle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

19 Average; 22 Good; 25 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		9					8	
			8	6			1	
1	2		9	5				6
6		2		7				9
			2		5			
7				3		1		8
2				9	1		7	5
	1			2	8			
	9					2		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

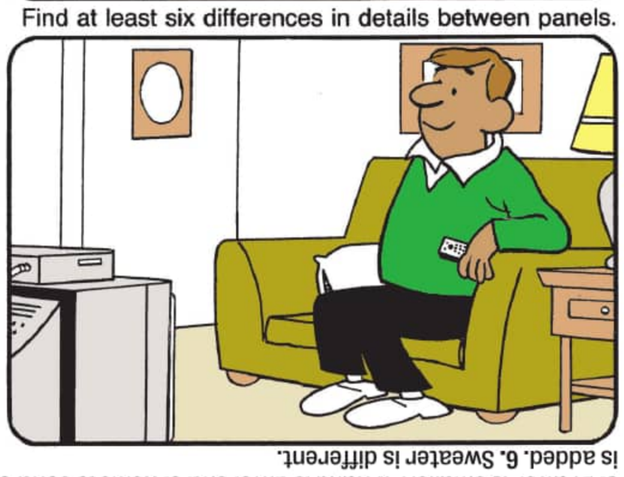
Easy = 1
1 3 5 8

Medium = 9
2 6 7 8

Hard = 54
6 8 9 8

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



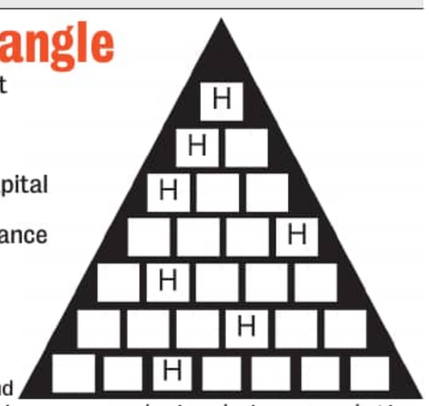
Differences: 1. Table leg is moved. 2. Pillow is moved. 3. Drawer is smaller. 4. Hand is different. 5. Remote control is added. 6. Sweater is different.

Riddler

Each of the following names is missing its vowels. Add the vowels to complete the names. all of which are linked BK, CR, LM, QT, RG, RM, SL

Alpha triangle

1 Planck's constant
2 Hello there
3 Drunk sound
4 Cemetery gate
5 Santiago is its capital
6 Tropical fruit
7 Means of conveyance



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye

I FEAR MISS OYL HAS STARTED A FEMALE REVOLUTION!
BLOW ME DOWN!?!
'AT GIRL WOULD DO ANYTHIN' TO GET ME OUT OF JAIL!!
JAIL THE MALE!
ONWARD, GIRLS!
DOWN WITH MEN!
5-17
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

Wayno & Piraro 11·6·25
The squiggly design on your T-shirt feels like a comment on my cooking.
BIZARRO.COM
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Dist'd by King Features

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

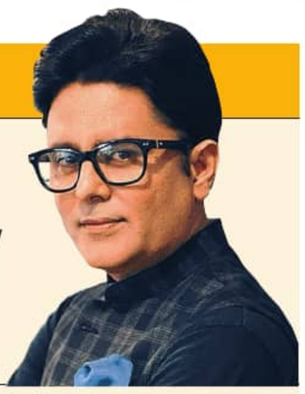
SHOW US THE CHAIN LETTER.
WHICH ONE?
"WHICH ONE"??
YEAAHH... I ENDED UP GETTING MORE CHAIN LETTERS THIS MORNING. UH... HERE, THIS IS THE LATEST ONE.
"IF YOU DON'T SEND THIS TO FIVE PEOPLE BEFORE 3 P.M. TODAY, YOU'LL BREAK A BONE"?
THESE HAVE GOTTEN A LOT MORE VIOLENT.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

Anticipate a year of high energy and professional milestones. Your career accelerates as you master new skills and techniques. In romance, spontaneity keeps the flame alive during weekend getaways. Home life is harmonious, with family members offering significant support. Overseas travel brings a fresh perspective on your life goals. Smart investments made in July show great promise.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Take a moment to pause and reflect on your recent growth. Your career is thriving, and by staying focused on your goals, you will achieve the professional success you desire.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Your natural leadership shines brightly today, inspiring those around you. Trust your instincts and move forward with confidence, as your creative vision is leading you toward a very bright future.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Optimism fills your heart today, attracting positive experiences and people. Share your enthusiasm with others, and you will find that your joyful energy creates a ripple effect of happiness everywhere.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

Embrace the joy of home life today by spending quality time with your loved ones. Financial stability is within reach, so continue to manage your resources with your characteristic wisdom.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Organization brings you a sense of peace today. By tidying your surroundings and planning your schedule, you will feel empowered to tackle your tasks with efficiency and a calm mind.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Focus on your long-term security today by making practical and wise decisions. Your disciplined approach to life ensures that you are building a solid foundation for your future continued success.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Your communication skills are your greatest asset today. Clear and honest dialogue will help you strengthen your relationships and lead to productive outcomes in both your personal and professional life.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Harmony in your relationships is easily achieved today through kindness and understanding. Your ability to see all perspectives helps you create a supportive environment for yourself and those you love.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

Your unique ideas are met with enthusiasm today. Share your innovative thoughts with the world, as your original perspective has the power to inspire others and lead to exciting opportunities.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Focus on your physical well-being today by engaging in activities that make you feel vibrant. A healthy routine will provide the energy you need to pursue your passions with enthusiasm.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

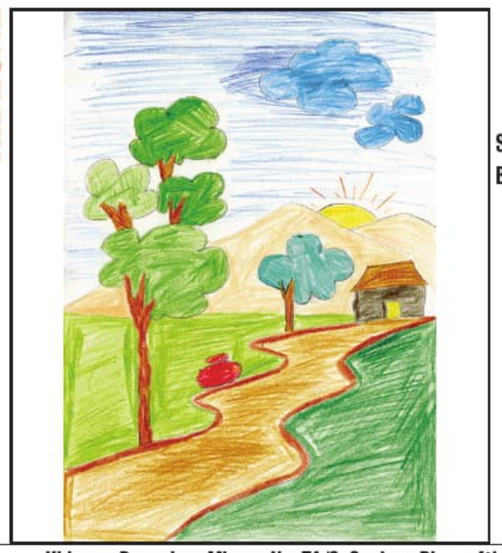
Your determination is a powerful force today. Stay committed to your path, and you will find that your hard work leads to significant breakthroughs and a great sense of accomplishment.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Deep emotional connections bring you great fulfilment today. Trust your intuition and allow yourself to be vulnerable with those you love, as these bonds provide the support you truly need.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Shagun, Bengaluru

Denisha, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

√(24 + 4 * (1/4) / [39/8 + (1/2)^3] * (-1)^7
√(24 + 1) / [(39/8) + (1/8)] * (-1)
-√25 / [40/8] = -5 / 5 = -1

RIDDLER

Bakw, Cairo, Lima, Quito, Riga, Rome, Oslo. They are all capital cities

QUOTE UNCODE

Photography is truth. The cinema is truth twenty-four times per second.

FAST FIVE

S	T	U	D	S
T	H	R	U	M
E	R	I	C	A
P	E	N	A	L
S	W	E	L	L

STRIKE OUT

P	E	R	T	A	I	N	S	■	S	Y	N	C	■	■
L	■	A	■	L	■	O	U	N	C	E	■	H	■	■
B	■	E	■	S	■	D	■	A	W	L	■	L	■	■
E	S	C	A	P	A	D	E	■	O	L	L	A	■	■
E	D	D	O	■	D	E	A	D	L	O	C	K	■	■
■	U	■	■	A	■	D	■	H	■	W	A	Y	■	■
A	S	S	■	A	■	A	■	F	O	I	S	T	■	■
B	E	C	O	M	I	N	G	■	K	O	H	L	■	■
L	■	E	R	A	■	O	■	A	■	V	■	E	■	■
A	N	T	A	■	A	N	A	B	A	E	N	A	■	■
T	■	I	■	I	L	Y	■	B	■	R	■	S	■	■
E	T	C	H	■	E	M	B	A	T	T	L	E	■	■

QUICK

■	S	■	S	■	E	■	T	■	■	P	■	■	■	■
A	L	M	O	N	D	B	L	O	S	S	O	M	■	■
■	L	■	H	■	I	■	A	■	U	■	O	■	■	■
P	A	N	T	S	T	R	U	G	G	L	E	■	■	■
■	F	■	A	■	O	■	U	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
E	G	Y	P	T	■	S	H	E	A	R	E	D	■	■
■	O	■	■	■	R	■	C	■	■	■	N	■	■	■
E	J	E	C	T	E	D	■	A	S	S	A	M	■	■
■	■	A	■	N	■	L	■	■	L	■	M	■	■	■
D	O	R	M	A	N	C	Y	■	O	P	U	S	■	■
M	■	R	■	A	■	N	■	H	■	O	■	■	■	■
D	I	S	A	P	P	O	I	N	T	I	N	G	■	■
L	■	T	■	S	■	V	■	S	■	I	■	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE

49. The sum of the digits at corresponding positions on each triangle equals 100.

BULL'S EYE

aide, allied, dell, detail, dial, diet, dilate, dill, edit, idea, ideal, idle, laid, lied, lilt, tail, tailed, tilled, TALLIED, tidal, tide, tied, tile, tiled, till,

SUDOKU

3	6	9	4	1	7	5	8	2
4	7	5	8	6	2	9	1	3
1	2	8	9	5	3	7	4	6
6	8	2	1	7	4	3	5	9
9	3	1	2	8	5	4	6	7
7	5	4	6	3	9	1	2	8
2	4	6	3	9	1	8	7	5
5	1	3	7	2	8	6	9	4
8	9	7	5	4	6	2	3	1

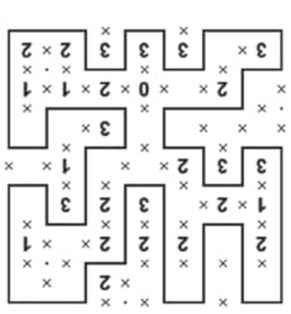
ALPHA TRIANGLE

H, Hi, Hie, Lich, Chile, Lichee, Vehicle.

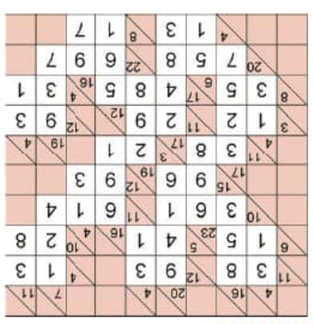
GO FIGURE

3 + 5 − 8 + 1 = 1
Medium
8 − 7 + 6 + 2 = 9
Hard
8 − 8 + 6 × 9 = 54
Easy

LOOP



KAKURO



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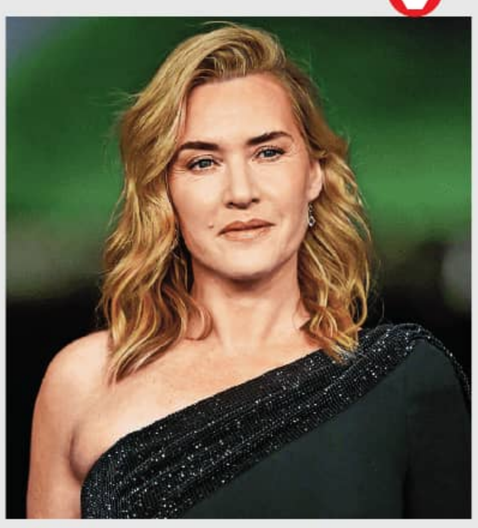
Sinister spaces

Celebrities who called out social media as 'toxic'

In today's world of digital boom, social media is everywhere. Most of us can't help but get sucked in, scrolling mindlessly, comparing ourselves to everyone else, without really noticing how it messes with our heads. However, it's not only regular people feeling the pressure. Big names in Hollywood and Bollywood have had enough, too. Lately, more and more celebrities have started speaking up about how social media wrecks mental health and self-esteem.

Here, we'll talk about six such celebrities who've decided not to stay quiet. Some have ditched social media completely. Others stick around, using their platforms to demand healthier, kinder online spaces. **–ETimes**

Kate Winslet



Kate Winslet doesn't hold back when it comes to social media. She's slammed its impact on self-esteem, beauty culture, and mental health more than once. For her, social media isn't just a distraction; it's something she flat-out refuses to join, especially because she thinks it's unhealthy for kids and teens. In a BBC interview, she revealed that at home, she keeps social platforms completely off-limits. Growing up under the spotlight made her extra wary of living online, and she's pretty vocal about the way social media warps beauty standards. She's even called out the pressure to take weight-loss drugs as part of the problem, blaming these platforms for pushing people to see themselves in a distorted way.

When Winslet accepted her BAFTA in 2023, she didn't just thank people. She used that moment to urge parents and lawmakers to step in, fight back against toxic online content, and protect young people from the addictive pull of social platforms.

Karan Johar

Karan Johar doesn't hold back when it comes to talking about social media. He walked away from Twitter after getting fed up with all the negativity and toxic energy. For him, it just wasn't worth it. He wanted more positivity, more space to focus on himself, and less time dealing with the nonstop noise online. Lately, he's been clear about how he feels. He talks about tuning out toxic people, building up your own self-worth, and refusing to let internet hate mess with your real life. He didn't disappear from social media altogether, but he's figured out his boundaries. Protect your peace, ignore the trolls, and remember: your worth has nothing to do with likes or comments.

Tom Holland

Tom Holland, the fan-favorite and friendly neighborhood Spider-Man himself, has been totally honest about how social media messes with his head. He's talked about getting overwhelmed by the nonstop comments and how it spiked his anxiety. At one point, he just walked away from it all because reading about himself online made things spiral. In a video message to fans, he explained that stepping back was the only way to protect his mental health.

To date, Holland has been active on social platforms on rare occasions, and most of the time, those occasions have turned out to be his professional commitments.

Sonakshi Sinha

Sonakshi Sinha has had her share of online hate, too. Back in 2020, she deactivated her Twitter account. She called out the trolls and bullies who made it a miserable place, and urged others to look out for themselves and walk away from spaces that feel more hateful than supportive. Her move got people in Bollywood talking about just how much damage social media can do, and how it chips away at creativity and happiness.

Selena Gomez

Selena Gomez might have one of the world's biggest followings, but that hasn't made her immune to social media's dark side. She's taken long breaks from Instagram and other platforms, calling social media "dangerous" when it started messing with her sense of self. Stepping away made a huge difference for her mental health. Time and again, in several interviews, Gomez has talked about the constant need for validation and exposure, and how it left her drained. She has also noted how taking time off cut down on comparisons, let her focus on therapy, and helped her take care of herself. At a press conference during the 2019 Cannes Film Festival, Selena, in fact, called social platforms "terrible" for her generation, especially because they push young people to compare themselves to impossible standards.

Love is all about ups and downs

MARALI MANASAGIDE (KANNADA)
3.0 RATING ★★★★★
- **DIRECTOR** Nagaraja Shankar
- **ACTORS** Arjun Vedanta, Nireeksha Shetty, Smruthy Venkatesh, TS Nagabharana, Manasi Sudhir, Swathi Gurudutt, Sangeetha Anil, and Bhojaraj Vamanjoor.
- **Duration** 146 minutes
- **Certification** UA

Nagaraja Shankar debuts as an independent director with Marali Manasagide. And he has chosen a good topic for his first outing. The film has all elements, including romance, breakups, sentiments, and melodious songs to entertain youngsters. The film touches on the importance of parenthood and surrogacy. Its 10 melodious and meaningful songs are a treat.

Marali Manasagide is the journey of Vikas aka Vikky (Arjun Vedanta) who falls in love with Chitra (Nireeksha Shetty). The movie begins with Vikas staying at his sister's house. He seems to be emotionally aloof. At this juncture, the director introduces a flashback narrating how Vikas and Chitra had become friends and how he proposes to her and how she tells him that she is already in love with her childhood friend. Her revelation leads to their separation. You have to watch the movie to know what happens to Chitra and what makes Vikas become close to Spoorthy (Smruthy Venkatesh).

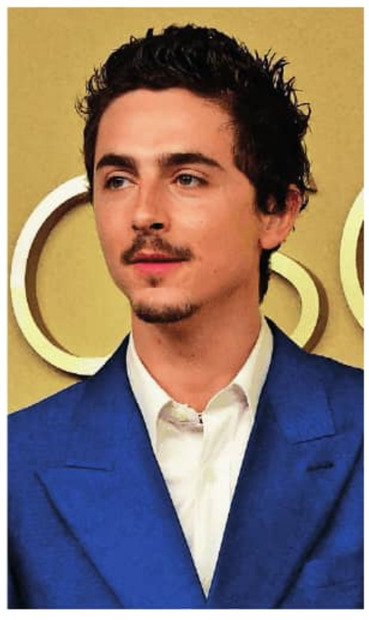
The director has tried to tell the story in a non-linear method and it may cause a little bit of confusion among the audiences who are not familiar with the concept of surrogacy.

As far as the performances of the actors are concerned, Arjun Vedanta, Smruthy Venkatesh, and Nireeksha Shetty have outdone each other in their acting skills. Veteran actors TS Nagabharana, Sangeetha Anil, Bhojaraj Vamanjoor, Manasi Sudhir, Swathi Gurudutt provide good support.

Songs are melodious and praise is due for Vinu Manas' lilting music. Cinematographer Halesh S has done a good job.

The movie is worth a watch for family audiences, especially for youngsters.

–Y Maheswara Reddy



Champion of the big screen

In a strong endorsement of the big-screen experience, actor Timothee Chalamet has said that films released in theatres create "more of a moment" compared to direct-to-streaming premieres.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the 30-year-old star made the remarks during a Valentine's Eve screening of 'Call Me by Your Name' at the Los Angeles Theatre on Friday.

Reflecting on his experience with streaming releases such as 'The King' and 'Don't Look Up', both distributed by Netflix, Chalamet said theatrical releases feel "more ceremonial" and come with a sense of anticipation that is harder to replicate online.

"It sounds like cheesy marketing talk, but it's more drumroll," he said, adding that it can be difficult to generate the same build-up when a project goes straight to streaming.

While he credited Netflix for its "unparalleled" reach and ability to shape the cultural conversation, Chalamet declared his support for theatres, as per The Hollywood Reporter.

Currently on the Oscars campaign trail following his Best Actor nomination for 'Marty Supreme', Chalamet recently won a Critics Choice Award for his portrayal of a table tennis prodigy.

He also addressed speculation linking him to British rapper EsDeeKid, reiterating that he is not the musician's alter ego.

Speaking about awards recognition, Chalamet said he feels fortunate to be nominated alongside his peers.

As quoted by The Hollywood Reporter, he said, "Everyone's killing it, so I feel lucky to be part of that community." **–ANI**